

From: Albert Ren
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Antitrust

Please do not allow the antitrust settlement to pass, this settlement does not help the consumers, Microsoft's competitors, or anyone else other than Microsoft. Consumers get continued lack of choice because Microsoft gets off the hook easily, and is then allowed to continue the same practices that it has been doing for a long time now. Competitors do not get any assistance because this is only a slap on the wrist for Microsoft so they will continue to be hurt by anticompetitive practices.

In addition, the settlement allows Microsoft to provide software to education in terms of its "value" not its actual cost to Microsoft. So Microsoft gets to count a \$499 Windows XP Professional full disk as its retail value and not the pennies it costs to actually make; this is *not* hard for Microsoft to do.

The settlement does not address the original problem: Will Microsoft stop commingling of software? Originally, with Internet Explorer, Microsoft managed to crush the competition by merging it with Windows 98 and subsequent versions, and then manipulating manufacturers to prevent the competitor from getting desktop access. In Windows XP Microsoft has gone farther, by integrating components from all sorts of uses, the most prominent being Windows Messenger, which Microsoft again claims, is not removable from the system. But when they said the same thing about IE, they produced a fabricated video of attempts to remove it. Can this company really be trusted?

About the education component of the settlement, where Microsoft will provide free software, this is nothing more than a blatant effort to try and monopolize the education industry, one where Apple currently dominates. As discussed before, Microsoft's retail value of software is much higher than its actual cost, so about a \$1 billion of software probably only cost them \$100,000. Microsoft has been looking to get in the education market for a while, and this is nothing more than government sanctioned monopolizing.

The settlement is too weak and too loose to prevent Microsoft from doing anything ever again. In fact, Microsoft has stepped up its efforts by commingling Windows Messenger to attack AOL's IM solutions and .NET to dominate the Internet itself. We cannot allow this to happen.

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Albert